

IN FOCUS

The Official Publication of the Jamaican Canadian Association
E-mail: info@jcassoc.org

November 2008 Issue

Miss Jamaica World visits youth in Jane and Finch

Rosemarie Hylton



Ms. Jamaica World 2008 Brittany Lyons and her Chaperone Delores Jackson arrived at the Jamaican Canadian Association on September 19, 2008. Ms. Lyons met with JCA's Interim Executive Director, President and Youth Committee Chair. She had a tour of the agency, and then attended the Volunteer Recognition Event at the Jane/Finch Community and Family Center, where she participated by handing out certificates of appreciation to the Centre's volunteers and engaged with the youth.

The 21 year old Kingstonian says she attended St. Andrew High School where

she participated in swimming, water polo and cricket. She has completed an associate's degree in Business Administration and is currently taking a sabbatical from the Fashion Merchandising degree that she is working on. Ms. Lyons states she is very elated about the experience of participating in the pageant and did so because her mother was also in the same pageant, and was placed second in 1980. Ms. Lyons describes herself as a proud, outgoing person who takes on challenges. One of her responsibilities as winner of the pageant is to attend a benefit concert of Hope for Jamaican children with Aids, where she will do anything she can to help with the cause. 

Be Movement - Be Still, Be Witness, Be Inspired and Be a Part of Progress

"The Mad Typist© 2008

Wow! Taking nothing away from historic moments, these are some exciting times that many people have dreamt about. Some have wished on them and others have acted to bring them to life. The moments I am referring to are the uplifting of the Jamaican and African Diasporas. I pen this as The Be Movement - Be Still, Be Witness, Be Inspired and Be a Part of Progress.

Take a break from what you are doing and I am not implying you break from this great article but pause from any task to carry out what I am about to present. Focus your attention, Shhh!

(silence)...Exercise what we sometimes fail to do, "Be Still".

Be still and let the mind capture the moment. "Be Still" allowing your mind to

give homage and blessing to what you and others have been witness to – my phrase "Be Witness".

I am talking about witnessing in August 2008, the Olympic feats of Jamaican Athletes that were put on the world stage... The In Focus team couldn't contain itself when they reported on this. In November, the world witnessed the first elected African American President, Barack Obama and pending January 20, 2009 inauguration ceremony, the new flavor to the American White House; The Obama family...JCA patrons on America's election night couldn't sit down or stop themselves from dancing. Savor!

"Be Witness" that these great moments have been echoed around the world and etched in history. Now bringing the witnessing closer to home at JCA's 6th Annual Scholarship awards ceremony in September, I witnessed local greatness in

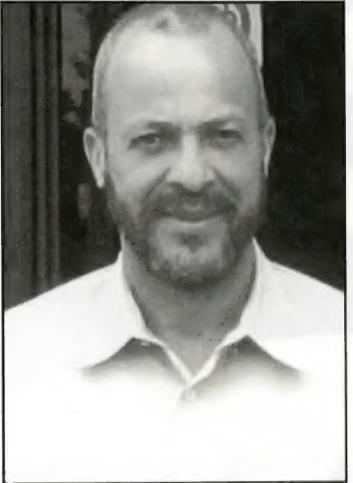
Education. The young award recipients were from a variety of professional backgrounds and all very accomplished in their own right. As the guest speaker Marcia Williams pointed out young people have to equip themselves to compete to move ahead. A few recipients showcased their creative talents by entertaining the attendees in theatrical dancing and soulful singing...no doubt they are equipping themselves. Savor!

While we recognize and salute individual or group achievements, let's remember that they need fortification and positive support. Savor the moment of being still, witnessing and freeing yourself to "Be Inspired". P4

**NEXT QUARTERLY MEETING
NOVEMBER 30, 2008
AT 2 PM**

**JAMAICAN
CANADIAN
ASSOCIATION**
995 Arrow Road
North York, ON
M9M 2Z5
Tel.: (416) 746-5772
Fax: (416) 746-7035

www.jcassoc.org



JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION IN FOCUS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

on strong participation from the membership as that is the only way we are going to be successful.

In early 2009 we will embark on our direct mail campaign. Our goal is to reach beyond the membership to the wider community including all the Caribbean focused businesses. As you are aware, in 2009 we will celebrate 47 years of stellar service to the Caribbean community. As such, we will be asking the entire community for a vote of confidence in the form of one dollar for each year of our stellar service. This means \$47 payable in full upon commitment or in instalments that fits each individual budget. It's not much to ask when you consider the work we are doing to make life better for our community. As our Jamaican saying goes "one, one cocoa full basket".

Fundraising: In our commitment to retiring the mortgage, we continue to embark on our fundraising events. We now have secured sponsors for all five prizes in the pending raffle. The top prize will be a Caribbean cruise for two. We are preparing to do the launch the first week of December and we are counting

program side, we will be changing the management structure in order to bring more stability and improve service to that area. The changes will be gradual starting in January 2009. We have done a lot of work in the board office to improve our appearance and our record keeping. We have hired an administrative assistant to assist the board in its administrative functions. One improvement you should notice is tax receipts going out in a timely manner.

Membership: We have established a volunteer awards committee to identify and select appropriate candidates for various annual awards; among them the "outstanding volunteer of the year award". We will be doing an open house geared towards attracting new members and our new members; this will be done on a semi annual basis.

Organizational Review: The review conducted by the hired consultants is now completed and will be presented to the membership in due course. In the mean time we are making a number of changes and improvements to serve you better. On the Social Service

Look forward to see you at our quarterly meeting on November 30th.

Yes wi can.....

In Solidarity

Herman Stewart

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Herman Stewart, President
Audrey Campbell, Executive Vice President
Solomon Spencer, Vice President of Volunteer Services
Nola Moore-Harris, Treasurer
Norma Brown-Larro, Executive Secretary
Kellie Spence, Assistant Secretary
Owen Dunbar, Building Chair

Season's Greetings

T.M. Typist ©2008

*And don't be surprise if you get a gift of hose
That JCA wouldn't mind our dime
For it's the thought that counts, so let it show*

*Stars of wonder
Christmas tree of lights
Santa dressed in his same old sight.
For the sake of Jesus Christ
Remember Christmas and keep it holy
And don't let gifts create pockets that are holey*

*For it's the day before Christmas
And not a store is closed
Perfumes, scarves, pajamas and all must go*

*Within our minds
That JCA wouldn't mind our dime
And also important, our time
To even sing a carol or two
Without listening only to the President and his crew.*

With you, we can!

Happy Holidays and Happy Jah Blessed New Year. Guidance and blessings to you and yours!

Walk Good



INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



are both reporting that there is a significant increase of Afro Caribbean youth that are in-care and awaiting adoptions. It is our intent to work closely with these agencies to provide culturally specific intervention measures and support.

Earlier this year the Ministry of Children and Youth Services announced that the Youth Opportunities Worker program will receive core funding. Yet, we were forewarned that the anticipated impact of the current economical situation may affect future additional funding.

The JCA is still in the process of finalizing the collective bargaining agreement. Negotiations continue to be very amicable.

The JCA secured funding through Service Canada for our summer camp program. A total of 5 counsellors were hired to operate the program. This year we had approximately 15 youth attended the camp for the 8 week duration of the program. This past summer the YOW Lead for the North Quadrant organized a back to school extravaganza with other partnering agencies which was a tremendous success. The extravaganza was attended by

approximately 1000 youth and their parents. This event will be annualized due to the demand and achievements experienced.

The seniors and staff participated in a United Way excursion of the launch of the 2008 campaign at the Nathan Phillip's Square. We are currently participating in the United Way fundraising event. At the JCA we have a penny drive that is thriving; a \$2.00 guess card with various gifts; and we are encouraging everyone to donate to this worthy cause and to assist us with achieving our goal of raising \$5000.00. I would like to acknowledge our staff Mary Mark, YOW Lead for the North Quadrant, for the extensive and exceptional work she has done over the past year.

This quarter was a very productive and exciting. I would like to thank Staff, Board, Volunteers and the Members for the continued support they extended to the enhancement of the association during my tenure. I wish everyone a festive holiday and all the best for the New Year.

LETTER FROM PARTICIPANT TO K-CLUB COUNSELOR

I was a member of the Transition Program (K-Club), offered at the Jamaican-Canadian Association (JCA). I am writing you in regards to Grace Williams, who was my counselor for the program. I would just like to commend Mrs. Williams on her excellent skills in educating and guiding me towards the completion of the program successfully. In the program, I completed sessions which dealt with: what is anger, the difference between healthy and unhealthy anger, conflict resolution, forming and maintaining

positive relations, conflict resolution, assault and its effects, power of choice and their consequences. Her advice and knowledge of these topics gave me a fundamental and clear understanding of each field. With her leadership, I received a certificate for finishing the program, in which I took to the Ontario Court Of Justice. With the possession of that certificate, it led my court case to the best result possible! I would just like to take this opportunity to thank and recommend Mrs. Williams to

anyone who has these types of issues/problems. Not only did she educate me but she helped me become a much better and stronger person who is now in control of their feelings and choices. I wish Mrs. Williams all the best in her future endeavors and if she continues on the same path I am confident that she will continue to be an asset to the JCA, her community and country.

Sincerely,

K-Club Participant

STAFF

Wainworth Morrison,
Finance Director

Janet Neilson,
Resource Development Coordinator

Marie Chapman,
Receptionist

Jennifer McFarlane,
Building Operator

CARIBBEAN YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES (CYFS)

Beverly Valentine,
Intake Worker

Grace Williams,
K-Club Counselor

Pamela Seaton-Griffith,
LIP Counselor

Paulette Crooks-Drummond,
Parenting Counselor

NEWCOMER SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

Joe Boetang, Counselor
Sonia Dixon, Counselor

OPPORTUNITY PLUS +
Sandra Holness, Coordinator

Annmarie Whyte,
Administrative Assistant

Dawn Brown,
Job Developer
Noeline John,
Employment Councilor

YOUTH OUTREACH

WORKER (YOW) AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAW) PROGRAMS

Karen Brown,
VAW and YOW Coordinator

Elvina Sandiford,
VAW Counsellor

Mary Mark,
YOW Lead Coordinator

Troy Logan,
YOW Counselor

Self-Confidence, Peer Pressure and their Relation to Community Violence



Join a committee:

- Membership
- Education
- Fundraising
- Youth
- Women
- Building
- Public Relations
- Finance

The Children's Christmas Party is nearly here, Sunday December 7th 1:00 p.m. Registration will be restricted to a first come first serve basis.

We're on the Web
www.jcassoc.org

Peer pressure can be both positive or negative, the latter being potentially self-destructive. Smoking, drinking, experimenting with drugs and engaging in risky sexual activity are some of the most common pressures that today's youth face. Of these, one of the biggest negative pressures affecting society at large is gang, youth and community violence.

According to Canadian official police-charge statistics, rates of violent crime among female youth have increased over the last decade, while rates of violent crime among male youth have remained relatively stable. Between 1991 and 2000 there was a 66 percent increase in violent-crime charges laid against female youth (322 to 481 charges per 100,000 girls) versus a 7 percent increase in violent-crime charges among male youth (1328 to 1341 charges per 100,000 boys).

But the question that has been repeatedly asked is, "Why do gangs form?". "Gangs come

into existence and flourish because the needs of the young people in a neighborhood or culture or family are not being met. The gang, in essence, fills the void." (Gardner, 1992, p. 83)

For someone with a high level of self-confidence, joining a gang for acceptance would be unnecessary. But for one who lacks self-confidence, becoming part of a gang that recognizes and accepts them is a satisfying solution. While some gang members glorify themselves and think highly of what they have become, some youth who join gangs suffer from a negative self image. Opportunities to feel good about themselves in their family or at school are few and far between. These emotional problems drive them to act super tough to compensate for their sense of inferiority. As in non-gang society, gangs offer many ways in which their members may earn respect. Succeeding in the commission of a crime earns respect. Respect may be earned by ripping people off, disrespecting authority, dominating another person, exploiting others, P9

Tia Sutherland

As human beings, we all want to feel like we belong. We want to be accepted by our family, friends or colleagues.

For most young people, to be accepted is exemplified by belonging to a certain group or crowd, dressing or looking a certain way, or taking part in certain activities. These are all ways of gaining favor and recognition by others. Wanting to belong and be like their peers is key factor in the formation of the youth's identity. But when does this social need become detrimental?

Be Movement cont.

Don't allow yourself to be still and be witness but unable to be inspired. From a word, a line, a story, feel inspiration pump through your blood stream. A poet quoted: "The heights by great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight, but they, while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night." These words serve to inspire greatness in the same way the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, "I have a Dream" inspired President-elect Barack Obama.

Inspiring stories such as those of 3 great Jamaican Athletes, Donald Quarry, Arthur Wint or Herb McKinley were told in Jamaican school books that gave inspiration to future

athletes. Usain Bolt can probably raise his medals to those stories and inspirational coaching. If you are inspired, share it. If you seek inspiration, don't be afraid to ask for it. It is the steel and concrete that we will fortify each others with...positive mentorship. While we all do our part in seeking or giving mentoring, then as a community we are heralding and blowing trumpets that we will "Be a part of progress". Many organizations such as the York Regional Police and the Eva Smith foundation supported the JCA's scholarship awards in their attendance or awarding bursaries. Volunteers contributed many hours to

We are well on our way.

Savor! 



TIDBITS

By Alton Telfer

It is that time of the year again when we have to mentally switch gears; go from summer to winter mode. I know that most of us, excluding the skiers would prefer to stay in the summer mode considering this summer was a fairly good one after deducting the 193.2 mm rainfall we had in July (breaking the record set in 1980) and adding the thirty plus degree

temperature in August. I enjoyed it and am hoping that you did as well. Summer officially ended on September 20th and the feel of fall season officially known as autumn was immediately felt due to the rapid fall of temperature especially at nights.

Many exciting things have been happening in our midst recently especially on the political front. I am sure you, like many people around the world have been watching with profound interest the turn of events in the United States of America. How Barack Obama has revolutionized the political scene, similar to what Tiger Woods' has done to golf, energizing the interest of young and old, rich and poor, people of all shades. There are many people living here in Canada that would be willing to travel to the states to vote on November 4th 2008 if they could do so, but did not bother to vote here on October 14th.

In this era, voting is no more a privilege but a right. Back in 1867, at the first general election in Canada, After Confederation, women were not allowed to vote. This was a privilege reserved for white

males over the age of 21 who owned property above a specific value. There was no secret ballot procedures, people had to publicly declare by show of hands who they were voting for. We have come a long way and we all should appreciate where we are at this point-in-time. At the last federal election, only fifty nine (59) percent of eligible voters cast a ballot. In Australia it is against the law not to vote and a fine could be imposed by the court if guilty. We here need to be more serious about the right to vote. There is a newly formed organization championed by Delores Lawrence and Company called "Black Vote Canada". It's mission (as I understand) is to create consciousness within the Black community as it relates to voting in all elections and to feel candidates for the various political office positions; they were noticeably dormant in the recent federal election.

I must also congratulate Ben Johnson for attending the funeral of former Ontario Chief Justice, Charles Dubin who died October 27th, 2008. Justice Dubin was the judge that stripped him of his gold medal he earned at the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

It also appears as if it was just a few months ago that Christmas was here, in another few weeks it will be here again, my, my how time flies! Let me now convey an early "Season's Greetings" and to wish you and your family a safe and enjoyable time and a very prosperous 2009. 

Let me now take you back to September 20th, 2008 when JCA staged its annual scholarship award presentation. The house was full and the evening was very



From left, JCA Scholarship Committee chair SYLVANUS THOMPSON, RAPHAELITA WALKER, her husband GIFFORD and JCA president HERMAN STEWART. Photo by Ron Fanfair

Twenty five students received scholarships and bursaries through the JCA Scholarship Awards.

The Membership Committee would like to stay in touch with you. If you move or have up-to-date contact information that would help us stay in touch, please complete and fax in the membership form to 416 746 7030 as soon as possible. This will help to keep in touch with you as well as reduce returned mail and the associated costs.

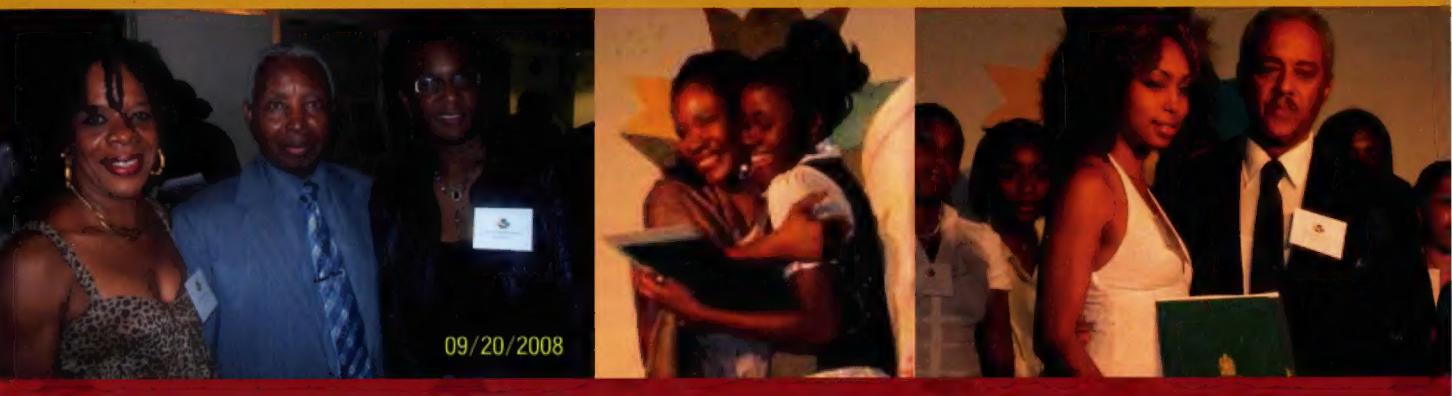
About Operation Black Vote: www.obvc.org

Operation Black Vote Canada is a non-partisan group, operating as a not-for-profit organization in Canada. OBVC was formed in the summer of 2004 due to frustration by the Federal political process. Its activities focus on the education, representation and participation of Black Canadians in the political process. Operation Black Vote Canada includes and is supported by members from several black organizations and Associations. They are located at 120 Adelaide Street West, Suite 900 Toronto, ON M5H 1T1

JCA IN THE COMMUNITY



2008 Annual Scholarship Awards



The Women's Committee hosted another successful Film Discussion and Community Gifting Event on Sunday November 16th. Donations were made to the Eva's Initiatives.

Look out for our International Women's Day celebration coming on March 8, 2009.



Contact members of the Editorial Committee to submit articles or place an ad:

**Rosemarie Powell
Rosemarie Hylton
Dwaine Osbourne
Sheila Raymond**

Tel: 416-746-5772
Email:
jcainfo@jcafocus@gmail.com

WOMEN'S CORNER

Women's Committee (Cont. from August Edition In Focus)

Women and the Environment Conference – June 14, 2008 Human Rights Then and Now: Implications for Black Women

ACTION PLAN

We are educated. We are united. We declare it. We together, solidly as one, know what we want are achieving it.

1. We are political. We are getting the educational information that we need so that we can develop and use our own tools. As we learn more about this (human rights) process, we are sharing it within the community.
2. We are utilizing the experience of people that have gone through the process, while being careful about disclosing sensitive information about our community members as they go through it. I inform my MPP now that I am participating in knowing who is going to be in the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal.

Tribunal.
3. I declare that we have the knowledge of the process. The information is available to us. We understand the process and make use of it. The Jamaican Canadian Association is instrumental in bringing in resources. I declare that church leaders are instrumental in bringing relevant resources to our community.

4. I declare that we are leading by example and we are instrumental in educating our young as they too further lead by example.
5. We as a community are political and make sure that our political parties have representation from our communities. The Jamaican Canadian Association Women's Committee leads the education and marketing for this forum to further share what we all know to join other groups.
6. I acknowledge that our community leaders are experts in Human Rights. They have always been. The gains we have come from us. The

Jamaican Canadian Association takes and continues this leadership to identify the challenge we are dealing with to be a source of collecting and disseminating and collecting and connecting to share the information and create the solutions for our benefit.

7. I am informed, my committee is informed. My committee is co-lead in gathering information in accessing resources in partnering with necessary legal bodies to ensure community representation. My committee is dedicated to ensuring full community representation to any necessary complainant.
8. Leadership for Jamaican Canadian Association is linked with our political representatives at all levels: municipal, provincial, federal.
9. We are capable of educating ourselves in the methods necessary to explore the political process regarding Human Rights as well we learn more the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal.

JCA VOLUNTEER AWARDS COMMITTEE

Camille-Hannays-King

On October 20th 2008, the Volunteer Awards Committee held its inaugural meeting. The Committee is comprised of the following members: Camille Hannays-King, Chair; Daphne Bailey, Erma Collins, Pam Reynolds, Membership Chair and Audrey Campbell, Executive Vice-President.

This Committee was formed to solicit and receive nominations for Volunteer Awards within the JCA and also the larger community. Throughout the year, the committee will be soliciting nominees for the following awards: Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award; Outstanding Committee of the Year Award;

President's Award; Quarter Century Club formerly the 25 year award; and will also be seeking nominations for various categories of Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Volunteer Awards.

The Ontario Volunteer Service Awards will be the first in the series of awards that the Committee will be seeking nominations for. In this category, six Adults and one Youth will be nominated from the JCA. Criteria: Adult nominees must have volunteered with one group for 5 consecutive years. Youth nominees must be under 24 and have volunteered with one group for two consecutive years.

The Committee is also seeking to nominate one person from the JCA for the June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Award. This award recognizes individuals and groups that have made an exceptional contribution to volunteerism in Ontario.

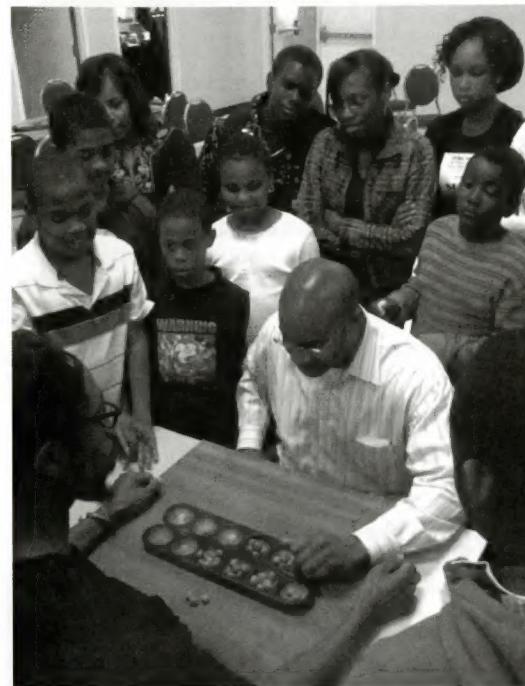
The Committee will be accepting nominations from December 1, 2008 until January 7, 2009 for the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Volunteer Awards. To nominate a volunteer you must complete a nomination form. Forms will be available at the JCA from December 1, 2008.



Saturday Morning Tutorial Program

- SMTP - BOLT to Educational Success!

Kellie Spence



Hopeful and enthusiastic contender (centre) plays the master, Brother Oji. The Owari competition was on!

Hello Everyone! The SMTP is here to help students reach their goals. It is a valuable and rewarding program that relies on many groups to be successful: dedicated students; committed volunteer tutors; active parents and the JCA Education Committee.

In October, we had a great heritage session and were introduced to the African Math game, Owari. Both students and tutors were excited alike to learn this game requiring strong math and concentration skills.

On Saturday November 22, 2008, we are planning an in-house workshop. We are finding a need to assist many of our students in getting organized. As we all know, an organized student is a successful student! Parents are welcome to join in on the session.

As history is being made in the American elections, we should remember that politics is not just a spectator sport - it is full contact! It is important that our students decide what role they will play in our society. Regardless of their profession, they should actively participate in the political, social and economic systems that maintain and improve our quality of life.

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For more information, contact Kellie Spence, SMTP Coordinator jca_smtp@kydiaz.com 416-746-5772 x 246



The JCA Domino Club meets on Fridays or Saturdays every week at the Jamaican Canadian Association inside the Games Room.

Call for more information:
Josephine Spence:
416-570-7601
Gifford Walker:
416-222-4695

Self-Confidence, Peer Pressure and their Relation to Community Violence Cont.

serving time in prison, and being a known associate of a gang member with greater status than one's own. The point here is that a gang provides these opportunities, which a youth with low self-confidence may perceive as unattainable outside of a gang.

The existence of self-confidence is a vital aid in the fight against peer pressure and gang/community violence. A person with high self-confidence is generally optimistic, and considers the world a good place to be. They possess the ability to solve (rather than avoid or deny) problems, see mistakes as learning experiences, understand and are able to express feelings and emotions in positive ways, and live life independently. Youth that hold these characteristics are less

likely to seek the acceptance from gangs because they would have already accepted themselves. They would not need approval from others to be who they are because they are happy with themselves. A person with self-confidence is not easily coerced into doing things that are not of their will or a part of their belief system because they trust and believe in themselves.

Community and gang violence is often a result of peer pressure, but the greater problem is a lack of self-assurance. The feeling of not belonging or having nothing has to be by far one of the most difficult situations to deal with. At the same time, we as individuals should have the feeling that

the only person we have to please is ourselves. It takes someone with an incredible amount of courage and self-confidence to defy the accepted group norms. Once we have trust and faith in ourselves, overcoming peer pressure will come naturally.

This new outlook is not always easy to achieve, or easy for others to deal with, but in order to beat the odds and avoid becoming just another statistic, it must be accomplished. Our actions should reflect our moral values if we want to fulfill our expectations and dreams. I hope that with time everyone will be able to say they live their lives according entirely to what they believe. Because sadly, not many people can truthfully say that they do.

Jamaican Canadian Association

celebrates



New Year's Eve Gala
Wednesday December 31, 2008

Dinner & Dance \$55 (or \$60 after Christmas)

Dance only \$35 or \$40 from 10:30pm

Cocktails from 6:30pm

Music By:

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